

Sliver of the Moon

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The crescent moon begins anew. As it struggles against the darkness, Nonon affirms her dedication to Satsuki. Nonon/Satsuki.

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femslash february 2021 prompt 14: heart.

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"My, my, I didn't think you'd like lying down on a cold, hard roof!"

Punctuating her statement by cackling, Nonon skipped across the clay tiles. She bounced off her toes towards Satsuki, who was lying on a deep blue shag rug, one she had taken from her closet. Nonon tucked in her legs as she sat on her knees, arms folded in her lap and back as straight as a ruler.

She took in Satsuki's form. Her once choppy hair had been evenly cut. Not a single split end besmirched her look. It splayed out behind her, forming a crown of inky black darkness atop her head. Under the moonlight, hair locks seemed luminescent and brought out the deeper hints of azure in her striking eyes.

But to an outsider, her outfit was commonly plain. A simple pair of shin-length stretchy pants and a loose pink top hardly suited a woman as prestigious as Satsuki. Nonon's memories of Satsuki included the most regal of outfits. Steam-pressed cloth and rhinestones, silk, lace, and linen pressing into her skin and choking her, they were tailored to her physique at her mother's command.

To Nonon, Satsuki was as stunning as ever. Whether she wore a bedazzled ball gown or a wrinkled trash bag, she was a goddess among humans. A voice in Nonon's head murmured that other humans were pigs in comparison, and she rolled her eyes. Some habits died hard. When she was alone with Satsuki, she found it rather difficult to push aside her internalized criticism of anyone who thought they came close to Satsuki's grace.

Satsuki continued to gaze at the seemingly endless darkness crossing the sky. No star twinkled. Only the moon, shyly coming out of its shell, carved a line through the night. With the oncoming clouds, it seemed destined to be devoured.

"Nonon, I've been thinking," Satsuki began, lacing her fingers on her belly, "about my next move."

Nonon tilted her head. "Have you decided on anything yet?"

"Tomorrow, I will be accompanying my sister on her date with Mankanshoku," she announced.

Nonon giggled. "Taking your new duties as an older sister quite seriously, aren't you?"

She sighed, remarking, "It's the least I can do. After all, I did lie to her and stab her several, several times." As Nonon tossed her head back and laughed, Satsuki hummed behind her closed lips. She patted the spot next to her, and Nonon quickly flopped to her side, propping her head up with her elbow.

Nonon grinned from ear to ear. She flicked her gaze to the sky, the color reminding her of Satsuki's hair. "I'm still not used to a short-haired Satsuki-chan. I might call you by your sister's name if I see you from behind," she admitted.

"But you never will. You know me too well," Satsuki replied, and she pointed to the sky. "Right now, you and I are at eye level for the first time, aren't we?"

"Usually, you're above me. Wouldn't you feel more comfortable if you scooted up a little?" Nonon jeered, but she lost her edge when Satsuki slowly shook her head. Trepidation crossed her features. Her lips tightened, creasing them into a straight line. She focused on Satsuki, waiting for her to continue as always.

Satsuki gazed at the sliver known as the moon. She reached up and pinched it between her fingers. Nonon believed it would have shattered under Satsuki's strength had it been in her grasp.

"After our arduous battles, we've finally entered a peaceful era," Satsuki said, resting her hand on her chest. "To me, this moon represents what comes next. It is slowly emerging and forming out of the darkness. Soon, it will bathe the world in bright light." She clenched her fist and held it straight out. "As the moon begins to wax, we, too, are at the starting point of our new lives. We no longer have to fight Ragyo or the Life Fibers. We no longer have anything to fear."

Nonon could have listened to Satsuki's speech forever and a day. She marveled at her, her eyes wide and wondering as she hung on to every word. Her hand fell on to Satsuki's palm. She traced the hint of scars and callouses decorating her fingers. Some were like the crescent moon, slight and thin, but still notable.

Satsuki rolled to her side. Her chest brushed against Nonon. Satsuki's cool breath hit Nonon's face, smelling of her evening tea, tart with a hint of mint.

"What are your plans for the future?" Satsuki whispered, and Nonon chuckled.

"Do you really want to hear it again? You must like my childhood recitals so much." She resisted her stronger half's urge to caress Satsuki's jaw. "Satsuki-chan, I'll always stay by your side."

Satsuki's sharp gaze never wavered. She stared into Nonon's eyes, her mask refusing to slip. "Nonon, you have been with me longer than anyone else. You were the first of my supports against Ragyo," she recalled, and she closed her eyes, lowering her voice. "Are you sure you don't want a life elsewhere? To see what the world can offer you?"

A chill raced down Nonon's spine. After everything they had endured, Satsuki had the gall to ask if she wanted to experience life away from her? She knew her intention wasn't malicious. Satsuki had always looked out for the members of her Elite Four equally. She supported their goals and dreams, having promised a life where everyone could be free from Life Fibers on the eve of the victory.

But what Nonon wanted was far different than what the others imagined. Her future was already next to her.

Nonon's teeth hit as her lips curled. She pushed off the ground and glared at Satsuki. She crossed her arms and hunched forward, Satsuki remaining still and comfortable on the rug. A flash of anger surged through her features, tightening her jaw and crinkling her eyes. She jabbed her finger at Satsuki's face, a sign of rebellion in the old days. If it had been anyone else assaulting her lady, then she would have eagerly executed them.

"Did you hit your head hard enough to forget that my loyalty is unwavering? Why would I want to leave you, Satsuki-chan?" Nonon slapped her hands to her chest, growling. "I've stayed by your side my whole life, and I wouldn't want to go anywhere else for all the money, clothing, and fame in the world! None of that interests me. All I want-" She threw her arms out. "-is to enjoy the same happiness with you!"

She caught her breath. The wind ruffled her sweater. Chills seeped into her skin. Swallowing, Nonon met Satsuki's unchanging gaze. Nonon's shadow caressed Satsuki's body, and Nonon gasped, the sight almost too much for her to bear.

It was the first time she had ever looked down on Satsuki.

"Satsuki-chan, er, Satsuki-sama, I-" Her voice caught in her throat. She clenched her fists and glared at the roof.

Satsuki stood as Nonon wavered. She assumed her position, towering over Nonon and leering at her. Her thick brows came

together in an expression that would have frightened even a hardened veteran.

Nonon sucked in a breath and met her glare. Her blood rushed between her ears, her head beginning to pound. But despite her worries, she made herself as tall as possible, sneering at Satsuki with every ounce of her courage.

"Nonon, it seems we're seeing eye-to-eye again," Satsuki crooned, soothing the agitated nerves in Nonon's brain.

"It's what I've always wanted," Nonon admitted with a dry laugh.

Satsuki's lips spread into a smile. She took Nonon's shoulders and embraced her. "Then, Nonon, let's see what this new world has to offer us," she whispered, squeezing her so tightly Nonon believed her spine would snap.

Nodding, Nonon wreathed her arms around Satsuki's waist. She buried her face into her chest. Satsuki's heart thundered in her ears as rhythmic as a drumbeat. She wondered if Satsuki, with her elevated senses, could hear hers hammering into her ribs.

Under the sliver of the moon, their future had never looked so bright.